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ABSTRACT

In today's complicated world, it is difficult to raise healthy, safe, and drug-free children. The Portland Touchstone Project tries to address this challenge by improving the resiliency of at-risk youth. The program is described in this report. It is based on a model that attempts to strengthen families and increase safety, security, and stability for children. The basic assumption of the model is that families want the best for their children, and even high-risk or drug-affected families can show considerable resolve in dealing with the stress in their lives. The project tried to engage high-risk families in working cooperatively with school and community efforts to reduce the use of student drug use. Findings from the evaluation of the project's two years of giving assistance to youth and families are highlighted in this report. It documents the work of the program, the success the program had in improving the lives of children, and discusses areas for further study. Profiles of participants are offered, including gender, grade level, and ethnic group, along with risk factor characteristics. Some of the methods used, such as the family unity meeting and family adaptability, are detailed. (RJM)

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Portland Public Schools
Touchstone Project

Final Evaluation Report
1994 - 1996

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October 1996

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Portland Public Schools
Touchstone Project

Final Evaluation Report
October 1, 1994 - September 30, 1996

Stephanie J. Mitchell
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Chapter 1. Portland Touchstone Project: An Overview

If it takes a village to raise a child, then I say it takes a vision, a plan, and a lot of hard work by committed individuals to build that village. (J. David Hawkins, University of Washington-Seattle, 1996)

Introduction

In today's complicated world, it is difficult to raise healthy, safe, and drug-free children. Families are searching for answers to the troubling issues confronting youth: drug use, poor school performance, crime, and violence. The Touchstone Family Unity Model was created to meet these challenges, strengthen family-school partnerships, and turn awareness of these concerns into positive action.

The Portland Public Schools established the Portland Touchstone Project in an effort to strengthen families and reduce the risk factors associated with future drug involvement. The project aims to improve resiliency or the potential for at-risk youth to develop into healthy, productive adults despite experiences of severe stress and adversity. Touchstone is based on the Oregon Family Unity Model, an innovative effort designed to strengthen families and increase safety, security, and stability for children. The basic assumption of the model is that families want the best for their children, and even high-risk or drug-affected families can show considerable resolve, ingenuity, and adaptability in dealing with stress in their lives. As a growth rather than a deficit model, Touchstone helps families to help themselves.

The Touchstone model was first piloted in two Portland schools in 1993-94. In October 1994, the PPS Drug Prevention Program received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act to expand the project in the Jefferson Region of north/northeast Portland. During 1994-96, the project was implemented in eight schools (six elementary, one middle, and one high school).

The Portland Touchstone Project is a drug prevention program for high-risk youth and their families. The aim of the project is to improve outcomes for identified students by strengthening their families. It also seeks to demonstrate the effectiveness of integrated school-based services which coordinate the efforts of families, schools, and a variety of community agencies.

The Touchstone Project focuses on one of the most vexing quandaries in the alcohol/drug prevention field—engaging high-risk families in working cooperatively with school and community efforts to reduce the risk of student drug use. The objectives of the project are:

- To increase the number of schools (from two to ten) implementing the Touchstone comprehensive model of integrated drug prevention and intervention services
- To annually involve 40-50 families at each school in developing family unity plans to strengthen communication, increase access to needed services, and improve the family's ability to support their children's healthy, drug-free development and academic progress
- To increase school-community service integration for high-risk students and families

The families and their children participating in the Portland Touchstone Project have exhibited a broad array of risk and resiliency indicators. Risk factors included socio-economic isolation, drug-related issues, poor academics, shortage of coping/life skills, and lack of school/community bonding. Families also exhibited many strengths, such as caring involvement, support, cooperation, humor, and honesty, which help to develop healthy, productive young people.

A review of the prevention literature has shown that prevention programs focused on reducing risks and enhancing protection are most effective in reducing the incidence and prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use as well as mental health problems (Haggerty, 1994; Institute of Medicine, 1994; and Hawkins & Catalano, 1992). This risk and protective factor framework is based on the premise that problem behaviors are reduced when factors that increase the likelihood of problem behaviors are diminished, and protection is enhanced when factors that improve the likelihood of healthy behaviors are increased. The Touchstone model attempts to use both aspects of the framework to strengthen families by reducing risks and enhancing resilience.

The Touchstone model is an indication of a growing societal trend to integrate education and health services. State and local agencies such as the Oregon Department of Human Services, Multnomah County, the City of Portland, the Regional Drug Initiative, the Salvation Army, and others have been supportive of the Touchstone concept. The project plays an important role in addressing concerns over the social and economic costs of alcohol and other drug use and abuse.

The purpose of this report is to summarize findings from the evaluation of the project's two years of giving assistance to youth and families. The information described in the report helps document the work of the program, the success the program has had improving the lives of children, and discusses areas for further study. The supporters of the Touchstone Project have shown their commitment to ongoing program evaluation and the use of its results for improving the program and uniting the efforts of the various stakeholders through continued cooperation and collaboration.

Chapter II. Implementation of the Touchstone Project

Program Description

The Portland Touchstone Project has been implemented in eight urban schools in the Jefferson Region of north-northeast Portland. The schools were selected because they had the highest percentage of free and reduced lunch. Seven of the sites have a majority African-American population and one school has a majority Caucasian population. The program serves approximately 250 youth from preschool to grade 12 and their families. Touchstone has provided coordinated, school-based services which link the efforts of families, schools, and community agencies to reduce the negative effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use, improve school performance and self-image, and increase strong, healthy family functioning. The project is delivered in a variety of locations (school, home, or neighborhood) consistent with family service delivery models.

Touchstone contrasts sharply with more traditional school interventions because it is not strictly a school-based service. It has two levels of services. One level is directed towards parents or primary caregivers of the youth referred to the project. School-based Touchstone specialists communicate frequently with the families to identify strengths, build support networks, and provide crisis intervention services. A second level of services is directed towards the youth and their siblings. The family and Touchstone specialist work together in a Family Unity Meeting to develop a plan to achieve goals set by the family. The family's plan is usually related to developing short-term improvements in real life situations, such as getting to school on time or completing homework assignments for the next two weeks. The Family Unity Meeting plan identifies specific support actions that each member of the family is responsible for to help achieve the goal set by the family.

The cornerstone of the Touchstone model is the Family Unity Meeting. At these meetings, the Family Unity Specialist helps families identify their strengths, articulate concerns, set goals, and develop a plan of action to achieve their goals and improve the child's potential for success at school and home. A Family Unity Meeting Agreement is completed at each session to document the goals set by the family, responsibilities of each family member or concerned person, and follow-up steps. The families have set goals such as better communication; anger management; improving school attendance/grades; reducing alcohol/drug use; stablizing the family (shelter, food, medical issues); developing positive attitudes in their children; and supporting children through emotional trauma.

Touchstone is designed to be responsive to the multiple needs of vulnerable family systems. It is

an intensive time-limited intervention dedicated to strengthening the family system. Family unity meetings help to establish a support network for children and their families often where few linkages exist. Research indicates that the formation and use of relationships is a critical protective factor for young people (Hodges, 1995). Youth who demonstrate the ability to create, develop, and nurture relationships have networks that can support them during crisis. Touchstone families and caregivers invite interested support persons to join them in the Family Unity Meeting, such as parents, step-parents, grandparents, siblings, relatives, principals, teachers, case workers, therapists, probation officers, counselors, Family Unity Specialists, and others interested in the child's well-being.

The underlying concept of the program is that by strengthening the family system, you strengthen refusal skills, enhance self-esteem, and promote decision making abilities of youth so they can resist the pressures to experiment with drugs. Touchstone, like many quality prevention programs, utilizes a family-school partnership theme. Two family system researchers, Oyemade and Washington, maintain that the root of drug abuse lies in early learning and family child-rearing practices (1989). They note several factors typical in families where children avoid drug use and delinquent behavior: warm, positive family relationships; a shared family commitment to education and society values; sharing household tasks; high aspirations for children's success; a tendency to attend religious services; strong kinship networks among family; and family pride in children's accomplishments.

Prevention research has found that programs are more effective when they include broad-based parent and community involvement, present skill-building activities as well as information, and impact all the social systems which influence the individual (Fetro, 1991). Several key elements emerge from this research that provide a framework for effective family intervention programs, including reliable information, self-esteem and goal-setting activities, resource identification, family support, education and stress management services. As Oyemade and Washington report, "a good drug abuse prevention program can help parents learn how to develop skills in family management, consistent interaction, reinforcement of children's learning, and how to teach children appropriate interpersonal skills." This is the direction that Touchstone has taken with families.

Project Staff

At each school, the Touchstone program is implemented by a Family Unity Specialist. The Family Unity Specialists have a background in counseling, often with special training and experience as a school counselor, alcohol/drug specialist, child or family therapist. The Family Unity Specialist introduces the school staff to the Touchstone model and conducts student intakes based on referrals of youth from administrators, teachers, and other staff in the school. The Touchstone specialist then

contacts the family and, using methods based on the Family Unity Model, seeks to engage the family in plans and services to improve healthy individual and family functioning. An intervention strategy called the Family Unity Meeting involves convening the family and other persons invited by the family to identify family strengths, concerns, and resources available to help resolve identified concerns. The Family Unity Specialist provides ongoing case management to support the family during this process. Finally, the Family Unity Specialist helps the family transition to a renewed level of healthy family functioning and self-determination.

The Touchstone Family Unity Specialist meets with students or family members multiple times in a given week. The staff may also have a variety of other indirect contacts with families during the week as they work with school staff or community welfare agencies on behalf of and in coordination with the families. This process serves to enhance cooperation among home, school, and community agencies; sustains families while they improve self-determination skills; and empowers family members to achieve individual and family goals.

The dedication and quality of the Touchstone staff plays a key role in the success of the project. "The work of the specialists is critical to the project," says Marilyn Richen, director of the Portland Touchstone Project. "Touchstone allows us to meet family concerns, offer access to resources, and empower individuals within the family. We have an opportunity to help develop more resilient youth by strengthening families. Families tell us that they are able to shape their own futures and have more confidence and control over what happens to them and their children." Each of the eight Touchstone specialists brings unique and special talents to the project. Over time they have developed into a strong, cohesive team that relies on their individual and group strengths to reinforce each other. The Touchstone staff are a culturally diverse workforce delivering services to a diverse population. They have freedom to create activities and explore strategies they feel will be most beneficial to the families and children in the neighborhoods that they serve. These strengths enable them to serve children and their families in a culturally appropriate manner.

The expected outcomes of the Portland Touchstone Project include:

- Providing 320-400 high-risk K-12 students with intensive, targeted school-community services
- Enhancing the ability of 500 parents to support their children's healthy drug-free development
- Improving student engagement and success in school
- Improving communication channels within the family and to various family support systems
- Increasing the ability of schools to meet the needs of students at-risk of drug involvement
- Improving collaboration between schools and various community-based service providers

Chapter III. Methodology

The evaluation of the Portland Touchstone Project has been a collaborative effort between the program staff and the evaluator. This collaboration ensured that the information gathered through evaluation activities produced reliable evidence to assess program strengths and weakesses, and will be useful for future program planning. Examples of the collaboration include pilot-test of two data collection instruments, regular communication between the project staff and the evaluator, and the use of staff feedback in the development of the family interview protocol.

A variety of activities were conducted to gather information for the program evaluation. Some of these activities were quantitative in nature, yielding numeric descriptions of the program implementation overall. Other evaluation activities produced qualitative information which provided narrative descriptions of activities and program participation to offer a "real life" quality to the data. The findings presented in this report are a combination of both types of information.

The impact of the Touchstone Project should extend beyond the observable dimensions of academic progress; the program is designed to change individual and family behaviors to achieve healthier family functioning. Yet, the project affects different individuals in different ways and to a different extent. The intent of this evaluation is not to measure all outcomes of the program, but to identify some areas of growth facilitated by the project. Thus, this final evaluation report focuses on six areas: 1) demographic characteristics, 2) student achievement, 3) school attendance, 4) student discipline violations, 5) level of family functioning, and 6) achievement of family goals. The study collected information to answer the following questions:

- What is the demographic profile of the students and families served by the project (age/grade, gender, ethnicity, and school)?
- To what extent did the project help participating families reach their goals? To what extent do families report change in their situation as a result of their participation in Touchstone?
- To what extent has the project effected positive changes in student attitudes and behaviors as evidenced in school and home?
- How do Touchstone students compare with a matched group of non-participating students on grades, attendance, referrals for alcohol/drug assessment, and disciplinary action?
- To what extent are alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs a concern for families? How many families follow through on referrals for help with these problems?

The program evaluation used several activities to answer these questions. The activities produced information concerning the program process and outcomes. The process evaluation information describes how the program works and helps provide a context in which to interpret the outcome data. Outcome information assesses the extent to which the program made a difference in the lives of youth and their families. The evaluation activities conducted during the study are described below:

Examination of project records. The project provided opportunities for staff and others involved in the project, such as family unity specialists, inter-agency representatives, and community agents, to meet regularly for networking and information sharing. Review of the minutes of meetings helped to describe the main themes of the project. Analysis of documents, such as *Student Intake Form, Contact Log, Exit Form,* and training materials helped to ascertain the level of program activity.

Family Information Questionnaires. Families were asked to complete four self-report questionnaires:

- At intake, parents or guardians completed the *Family Contact Information Form* to provide information on demographic characteristics of the family.
- The *Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES II)* was given to assess family functioning style. Two scales measured family cohesion and family adaptability. The instrument was given to all parents and youth in grades 5-12 at intake and exit from Touchstone. Data are summarized to provide information on trends in family functioning.
- A needs assessment survey, the *Family Resource Scale*, was administered to parents during the first school year. The survey assessed the adequacy of resources (food, housing, clothes, etc.) to meet the needs of the family. The scale was determined not to be effective with the population and was dropped in year two.
- The *Family Unity Meeting Agreement* form was used to document family unity meetings, the type of goals set by families, and progress towards meeting their goals.

Student database information. The PPS student master database provided information on student achievement, school attendance, and disciplinary violations to measure improvement in academic achievement and school progress. These data are summarized to provide statistical information regarding number of students served and characteristics of those students.

Interviews with parents. In coordination with the school-based family unity specialists, 52 interviews were conducted with families who had participated in the project for at least six months. These interviews provided an opportunity to hear from those who had the greatest vested interest in the program, the parents and students themselves.

Direct observation. Over the two school years, the author attended a sample of program activities and visited six of the schools implementing the project. During these observations, she spoke with administrators, family unity specialists, classroom teachers, parents, and students involved in the program. These observations provided another opportunity to receive feedback from school staff and participants directly involved in the program.

Limitations

Fidelity of implementation is a common issue in program evaluation across multiple sites. In this evaluation, the researcher reviewed the level of program implementation of the Touchstone Project in the eight schools. Data were consistently lacking from one elementary school. This site did not fully implement the Touchstone model as described in the Family Unity Model training or finish data collection to document Touchstone cases at the school. A variety of individuals, including the evaluator, attempted to provide assistance to the Touchstone staff person at this school to facilitate a full implementation of the program. The findings section of this report does not include data from this school.

Another limitation of the study concerned the follow-up family interviews. The family interviews were conducted with a sample of families who had participated in Touchstone for six months or longer. The structured interview was conducted by the school-based Family Unity Specialist. This condition enhanced the access to families and undoubtedly increased the number of families who would candidly discuss their participation in the program. But, the results of these follow-up interviews should be viewed with some caution due to potential bias in administration and self-report data.

Chapter IV. Findings

Finding: ***Over the past two years there has been an increase in the number of schools providing Touchstone services.***

One of the successes of the Portland Touchstone Project has been to increase the number of schools implementing the program to eight schools, thus providing family unity services to hundreds of students and their families. During the 1994-96 school years, eight Jefferson Region schools were served by full-time Touchstone Family Unity Specialists. As is common with many innovations, it has required almost a year to firmly establish the Touchstone program in these schools and achieve a full caseload of families. In many of the schools, the program has become more fully developed during the second year of the program. Specifically, teachers, staff, and principals have come to better understand the purpose of the program, how the Family Unity Specialist works, and the difference it makes to students and families to have access to Touchstone services. The program has also become better known and better integrated into the functioning of the school.

Strong administrative support for the program and the quality of the Family Unity Specialists themselves have been important keys to the successful implementation of Touchstone. The skills, personality, and determination to succeed enabled the Family Unity Specialists to build rapport with students and offer a stable foundation for families in crisis. Over the term of the project, the Family Unity Specialists met regularly and learned to rely on each others' strengths. Coming from diverse backgrounds, some of the staff had educational experience and others came from social welfare backgrounds, but together they have come to better understand how best to work within the culture of the school system.

Finding: ***Touchstone serves a significant number of at-risk youth and their families.***

Table 1 presents information on the number and percent of parents and youth participating in the Portland Touchstone Project between October 1994 and September 1996. Nearly 240 families and over 300 youth were referred to the project. A total of at least 541 individuals participated in Touchstone during the two years of the project. The project met most of its desired goal of serving 320 youth; based on the actual number of Touchstone contacts, the project served 302 PK-12 youth. The project did not meet its goal of working with 500 parents; a total of 239 parent/cargivers actually received intensive, targeted Touchstone services to support a healthy and drug-free environment.

The Touchstone Family Unity Specialists gradually and steadily developed their caseload of families. The project defined a multi-stage process to identify the level of participation to establish a Touchstone "case" family. A Touchstone case means the family has completed the following steps: 1) student intake, 2) parent consent, 3) family contact information, 4) pre-post Family Adaptability & Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES II), and 5) a family unity meeting held within six to eight weeks of initial contact. Table 1 presents information on the number of project participants by Touchstone case families and non-case contacts. Of the 239 parents contacted by the project, 85 percent of the families (n=203) completed the multi-stage intake process to be considered a Touchstone case. A typical Portland Touchstone case involved a single parent, two at-risk students referred to the project, and two or three siblings.

Table 1. Touchstone Participants by Role, 1994-96

	Touchstone Cases		Non-Case Contacts		Total	
Participant	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Parents	203	37.5%	36	6.7%	239	44.2%
Students	245	45.3%	57	10.5%	302	55.8%
Total Participants	448	82.8%	93	17.2%	541	100.0%

Finding: ***Young men are more often targeted for Touchstone services than young women. Family intervention services are directed primarily at early elementary grades.***

Table 2 summarizes the gender and grade level of Touchstone students. A total of 245 Touchstone case youth in preschool through grade 12 received project services. Overall, 58 percent of the youth are male (n=141) and 42 percent are female (n=104). Seventy percent of the children are in grades PK-5 (n=173) because six of the program sites are in elementary schools. Seventeen percent of the students are in middle school (n=42), and 12 percent are in one high school (n=30).

Table 2. Touchstone Students by Gender and Grade Level, 1994-96

	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
Grade Level	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Grades PK-5	110	44.9%	63	25.7%	173	70.6%
Grades 6-8	27	11.0%	15	6.1%	42	17.1%
Grades 9-12	4	1.6%	26	10.6%	30	12.2%
Total	141	57.6%	104	42.4%	245	100.0%

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Finding: ***Touchstone serves a representative number of African-American, Caucasian, and Hispanic youth and their families.***

Table 3 compares the ethnicity of Touchstone participants with other students in the Touchstone schools during 1995-96. The 245 Touchstone students are 4.5 percent American Indian, 25 percent European American, 65 percent African American, .4 percent Asian American, and 5 percent Hispanic American. The percentage of European American, African American, and Hispanic American students approximates the ethnicity of the population at Touchstone schools. More American Indian students received Touchstone services (4.5%) than are represented in the student population of Touchstone schools (2.4%). Fewer Asian American students participated in Touchstone (.4%) than are enrolled in Touchstone schools (3.8%).

Table 3. Ethnicity of Touchstone Students and School Population, 1995-96

	Touchstone Students		Touchstone Schools	
Ethnic Group	N	Percent	N	Percent
American Indian	11	4.5%	120	2.4%
European American	61	24.9%	1199	24.4%
African American	160	65.3%	3133	63.7%
Asian American	1	0.4%	189	3.8%
Hispanic American	12	4.9%	274	5.6%
Total	245	100.0%	4915	100.0%

Finding: ***Touchstone impacts the lives of at-risk youth and their families.***

Figure 1 illustrates the risk factors of 245 Touchstone students at the time of intake into the project. Data are presented on the most frequently identified student risk factors in four domains: school, individual, family, and peer group. Each domain includes several specific indicators of potential risk. The types and prevalance of student risk factors were consistent over the two school years. The most frequently reported risk factors were related to school issues, specifically poor academic progress and poor school attendance. Among Touchstone students, 43 percent were reported to have fallen behind in class work (n=105), 41 percent of students had low academic achievement (n=100), 34 percent of youth had low commitment to school (n=84), and 32 percent of students had high absenteeism/tardiness (n=79). The most frequently reported risk factors in the family domain were: 43 percent of students had experienced family difficulties, such as divorce or death in the

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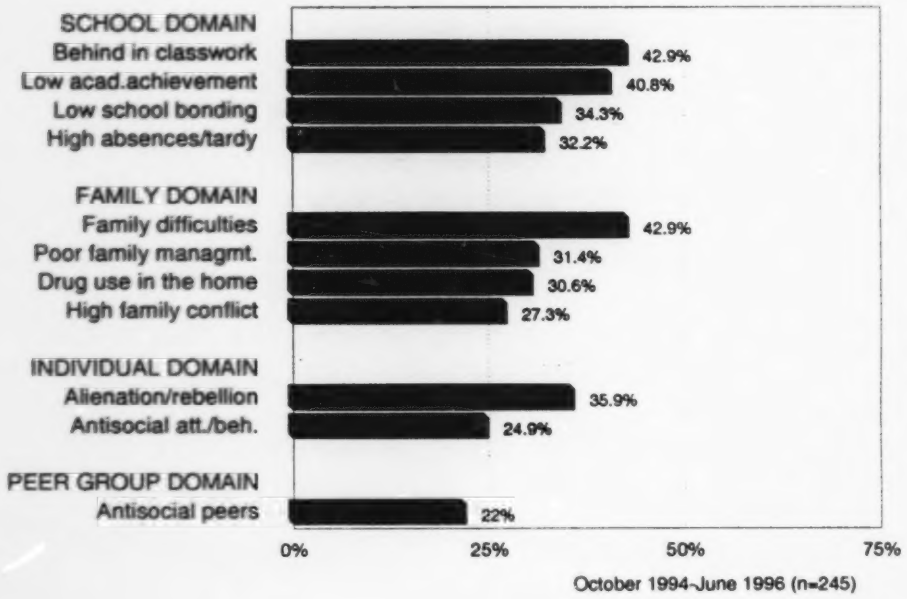
family (n=105); 31 percent of students live with poor family management, ATOD use in the home (n=76); and over 27 percent of students experience a high level of family conflict at home (n=67). The two key risk factors in the individual domain were: alienation/rebelliousness among 36 percent (n=88) and antisocial behavior or attitude favoring antisocial behavior displayed by 25 percent of Touchstone students (n=61). The most frequently reported risk factor associated with the peer group was 22 percent of students who regularly interact with antisocial peers (n=54).

Figure 1

Student Risk Factors by Domain
School, Family, Individual & Peer Group



Finding: ***Touchstone continues to use strength-based interventions and case management to move children and their families toward wellness and self-sufficiency.***

Figure 2 summarizes information related to Touchstone Family Unity Meetings during 1994-96. The school-based staff facilitated 274 family unity meetings attended by 880 family members and their supporters. A total of 137 Touchstone case families attended one or more Family Unity Meetings. Overall, the project held an average of two family unity meetings per Touchstone case family.

Analysis of the Family Unity Meeting Agreements indicates that of 320 goals set by the families,

70.3% of the goals were achieved (n=225), 15% were in progress (n=48), and 14.6% were not met (n=47). The goals which were most frequently achieved included: improved communication, improved school attendance and grades; reduction in alcohol/drug use; improved family situation, such as shelter, food, medical care, transportation; positive attitudes in their children; and supporting children through emotional trauma.

Figure 2

Touchstone Family Unity Meetings

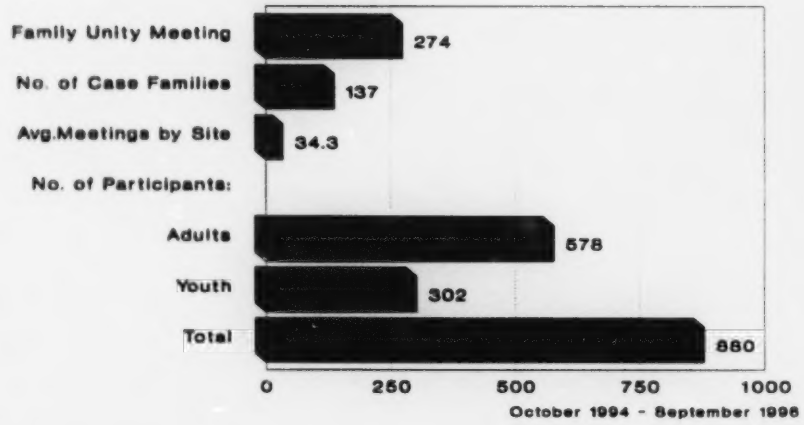


Table 4 summarizes the number of Family Unity Meetings for the Portland Touchstone Project overall and by school. A total of 880 individuals (578 adults and 302 youth) participated in the Touchstone family unity meetings over two years. This number is exceptional because it represents an *unduplicated count* of the number of individuals who took part in family unity meetings. Many family members and other support individuals participated in more than one family unity meeting. The number of individuals attending family unity meetings ranged from 2 to 16. A small meeting might involve the youths' parent or caregiver and the Family Unity Specialist to confer on progress in meeting goals set by the family. Larger, more complex family unity meetings might bring together all the individuals involved with the family system, including family members, relatives, teachers, counselors, and representatives of various community social service agencies to establish a coordinated plan for building family unity and strengths.

The total number of family unity meetings sponsored by the Portland Touchstone schools was consistent over the two years of the project; an average of 21.3 meetings per school were held in 1994-95 and 21.8 meetings per school in 1995-96. The average number of family unity meetings held by the schools ranged from 1.0 to 3.5 meetings per family.

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Table 4. Family Unity Meetings by Project and School, 1994-96

School	No. of Cases	No. of Family Unity Meetings	Average No. of Meetings per Family	Family Unity Meeting Participants: Adults	Youth	Total
Portland Touchstone	**137**	**274**	**2.0**	**578**	**302**	**880**
School 1	19	66	3.5	105	52	157
School 2	26	42	1.6	135	68	203
School 3	8	8	1.0	24	17	41
School 4	20	33	1.7	58	59	117
School 5	17	42	2.5	82	50	132
School 6	15	45	3.0	65	30	95
School 7	9	11	1.2	28	10	38
School 8	23	27	1.2	81	16	97

Finding: ***Touchstone participants showed significant improvement in healthy family functioning, especially in family cohesion and family adaptabilty.***

The Family Adaptability & Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES II) was used to assess the family functioning style. Two scales on the instrument measure family adaptability and family cohesion. *Family cohesion* assesses the degree to which family members are connected to or separated from their family. Cohesion is defined as the emotional bonding that family members have toward one another. There are four levels of cohesion: disengaged, separated, connected, and very connected. *Family adaptability* assesses the extent to which the family system is flexible and able to change. Adaptability is defined as the ability of a family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and family rules in response to situational and developmental stress. There are four levels of adaptability: rigid, structured, flexible, and very flexible. Together these two perspectives yield a *Family Type* which helps tap the complexity and richness of the family system. Figure 3 illustrates the family functioning levels and scales defined by the Family Circumplex Model (Olson, 1989). Overall, the top two levels are hypothesized to be most viable for healthy family functioning and the lower two levels are seen as more problematic for families over time.

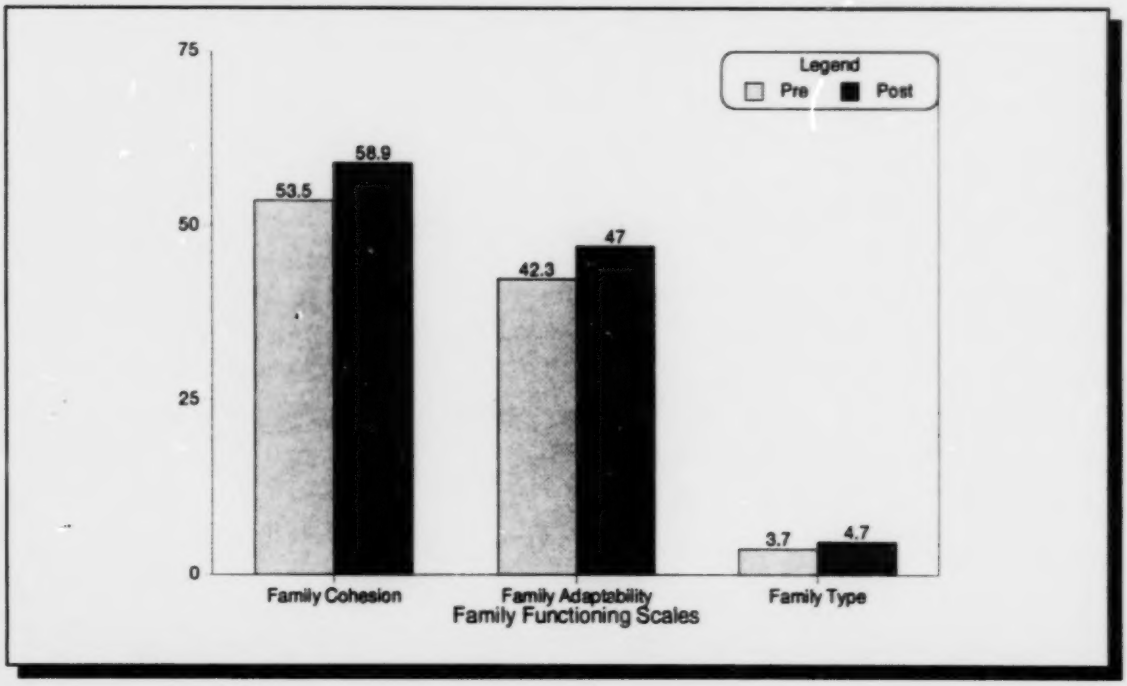
Figure 3. Levels of Family Cohesion, Adaptability, and Family Type (FACES II)

LEVEL	COHESION	ADAPTABILITY	FAMILY TYPE
Healthier Functioning	Very Connected	Very Flexible	Balanced
	Connected	Flexible	Moderately Balanced
More Problematic	Separated	Structured	Mid-Range
	Disengaged	Rigid	Extreme

Figure 4 shows the results of the FACES II pre- and post-test with Portland Touchstone participants over the two years of the project. Pre-post data were analyzed for a sample of 149 individuals (86 parents and 63 students in grades 5-12) who had participated in Touchstone for at least six months. Analysis of the data indicates that before taking part in Touchstone, participants had a cohesion mean score of 53.5 (separated), an adaptability mean score of 42.3 (structured), and a family type mean score of 3.7 (mid-range). The pre-program results indicate family functioning that may be problematic for families over time.

After receiving Touchstone services, participants had a cohesion mean score of 58.9 (borderline connected), an adaptability mean score of 47.0 (flexible), and a family type mean score of 4.7 (high mid-range). The mean scores of the 149 individuals with intact pre- and post-FACES assessments show a strong positive trend toward more healthy family functioning for families who participate in the Portland Touchstone program. These results, from a large sample of families who have received at least six months of program services, indicate that *Touchstone families have shown significant improvement in family cohesion and family adaptabilty.*

Figure 4. Mean Family Functioning
Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale, 1994-96 (n=149)



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Finding: ***Student achievement gains in reading and mathematics for Touchstone youth are higher than a matched group of non-participants.***

The study also investigated students' academic achievement and school attendance while involved in Touchstone. Although the project is not designed to directly impact basic skills, there is a strong link between family involvement in a child's education and improved school performance. To investigate this link, we examined the effects of Touchstone participation on student learning.

Student achievement in reading and mathematics was measured by the Portland Achievement Levels Tests (PALT). The PALT tests are administered each spring to district students in grades three through eight. Students' academic data were analyzed at baseline in spring 1994 (a year before Touchstone began), in spring 1995 (after year one of Touchstone), and in spring 1996 (after year two of Touchstone). Achievement data is best analyzed by grade level, but there were too few Touchstone students in grades 6 through 12 to allow an effective analysis and PALT tests are not given to students in grades K-2. Data analysis for Touchstone was limited to grades 3 through 5.

Table 5 compares the mean student achievement scores of Touchstone grade 3 students with two comparison groups. The first is a matched comparison group of students in the same grade, classroom, and risk factors as the Touchstone students at the time of referral to the project. The second comparison is the grade three students districtwide. Test scores indicate that the Touchstone and matched comparison group were similar in reading and math achievement. While these groups scored lower on the PALT scale than district third graders in reading and mathematics, the Touchstone third graders gained an average of five RIT score points in reading between 1995 and 1996. In mathematics, the Touchstone students gained .4 points. These gains by the Touchstone third grade students are higher than gains by the comparison groups.

Table 5. Student Achievement on PALT, Grade 3, 1995-96

Achievement Test	N	Spring 1995	Spring 1996	Gain
READING				
Touchstone	28	189.1	194.3	5.2
Comparison	26	191.1	193.9	2.8
District	3953	199.3	200.3	1.0
MATHEMATICS				
Touchstone	27	198.2	198.6	0.4
Comparison	24	199.7	198.9	-0.8
District	3953	202.2	202.1	-0.1

Analysis of student achievement in grades four and five compared the gains of the Touchstone and comparison group students from spring to spring in reading and math. The results would indicate one of three findings — 1) Touchstone students gained more than students in the comparison groups, 2) Touchstone students gained less than comparison students, or 3) there is no compelling evidence that gain by Touchstone student was different than gain by the comparison groups.

Figure 5 illustrates the PALT reading scores of Touchstone fourth graders and three comparison groups. The groups are: 1) a matched comparison of students in the same grade, class, and risk factors as Touchstone youth, 2) grade 4 students in Touchstone schools, and 3) grade 4 district students. Touchstone students had lower reading scores than the total grade and district populations. Over two years, Touchstone fourth graders gained 6.7 and 7.6 points in reading respectively on the PALT scale, while the matched comparison group gained 5.4 and 5.8 points. This difference in mean gains causes the test statistic to indicate that a chance difference this high would occur less than 5% of the time; this indicates that the Touchstone and comparison group differed more in reading growth than would be expected by chance. Overall, the Touchstone fourth grade group had greater reading growth than the matched comparison group.

Figure 5. Grade 4, PALT Reading, 1994-1996

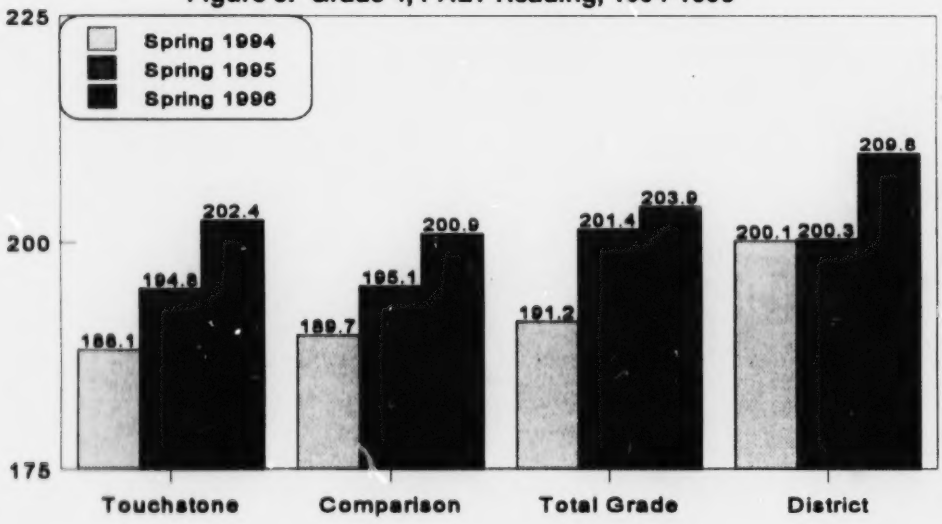
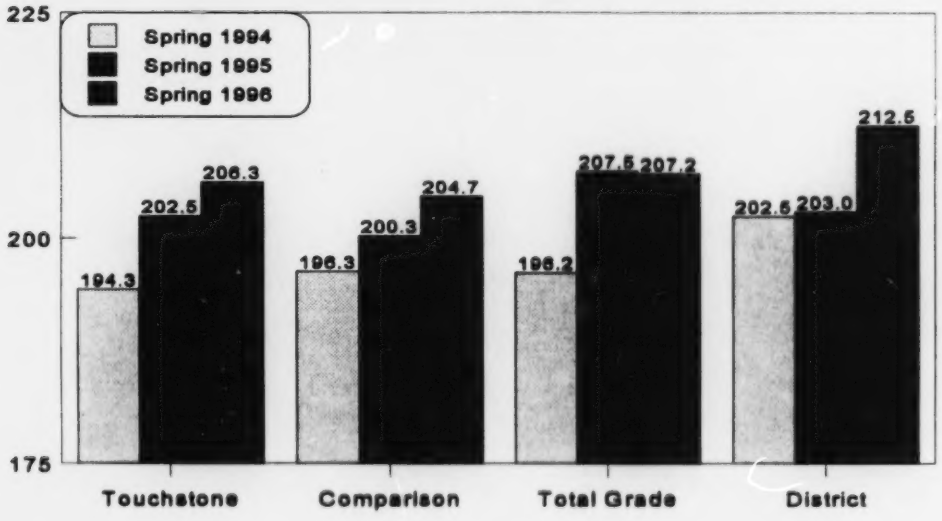


Figure 6 presents the PALT mathematics test scores of fourth graders in Touchstone and three comparison groups. Analysis of the math scores show that Touchstone and the matched comparison group were similar, but these groups had lower math achievement than the total grade and district populations. Yet over the two years, Touchstone students gained 8.2 and 3.8 RIT points, while the matched comparison group gained 7.0 and 1.4 points. As in reading, this mean gain

difference of 1.2 and 2.4 points between the Touchstone and matched comparison again is more growth than would be expected by chance. The results indicate Touchstone students had greater mathematics growth than the matched comparison group.

Figure 6. Grade 4, PALT Mathematics, 1994-96



The next exhibits show the PALT reading achievement of fifth graders in Touchstone and the comparison groups (matched comparison by grade, class, and risk factors; total grade five youth in Touchstone schools; and district grade five students). The pattern of gains in mathematics is similar to the results exhibited in grade four.

Figure 7 displays the PALT reading scores for Touchstone fifth graders and the comparison groups. In the first year after their participation in the project, Touchstone students gained 2.4 points compared to 3.8 points on the PALT scale by the matched comparison group. In year two, Touchstone students gained 1.0 points versus .7 points made by the comparison group. These differences in mean gains would occur more than 5 percent of the time and are consistent with the hypothesis that there is no difference in reading growth between the Touchstone and matched comparison group in grade five. The results indicate that grade five Touchstone students and the comparison group had lower reading achievement than the total grade five and the grade five district populations. There was no statistical difference in reading growth between the Touchstone and total grade populations in 1994 and 1995. The test statistics show a meaningful difference between Touchstone and the total grade and district populations in spring 1996.

Figure 7. Grade 5, PALT Reading, 1994-1996

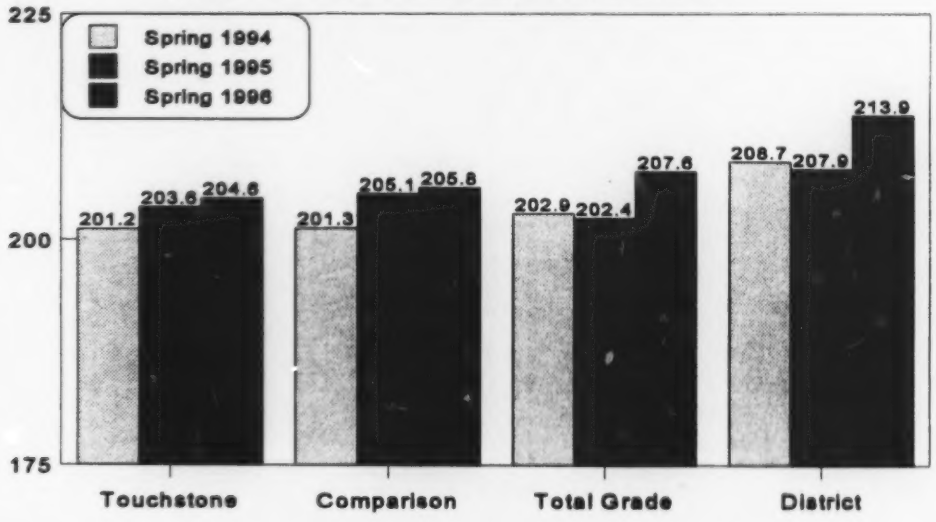
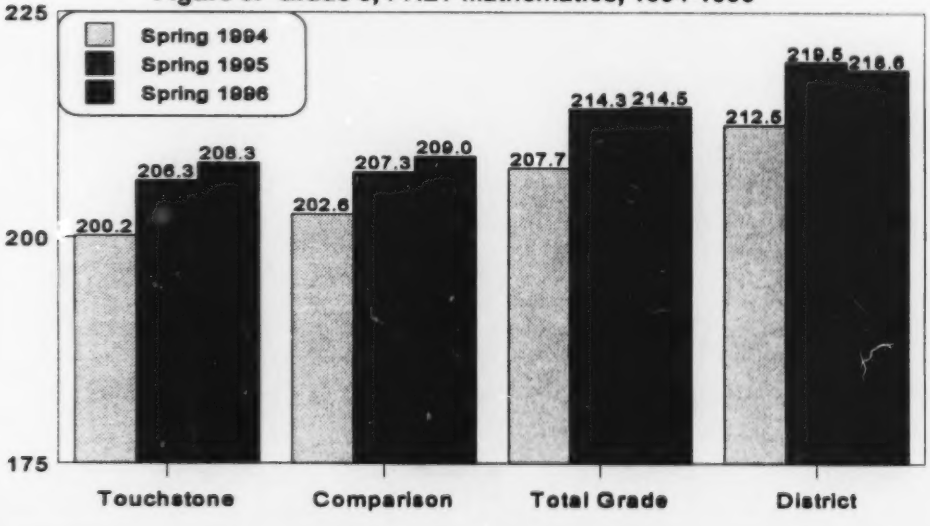


Figure 8 presents the fifth graders math scores on the PALT test. Over two years, the Touchstone group gained 6.1 and 2.0 points on the PALT scale; the comparison group gained 4.7 and 1.7 points. In year one, the mean gain difference between Touchstone and the matched comparison group is more growth than would be expected by chance. Thus, the Touchstone group had greater gains in mathematics than the comparison group. This trend moderated in year two. Analysis of the results with other groups showed that Touchstone and the comparison group had lower mathematics achievement than the total grade and district populations. In year one, the mean gains in mathematics were similar among the Touchstone, total grade, and the district populations, while in year two Touchstone participants made larger gains than the total grade and the district fifth graders.

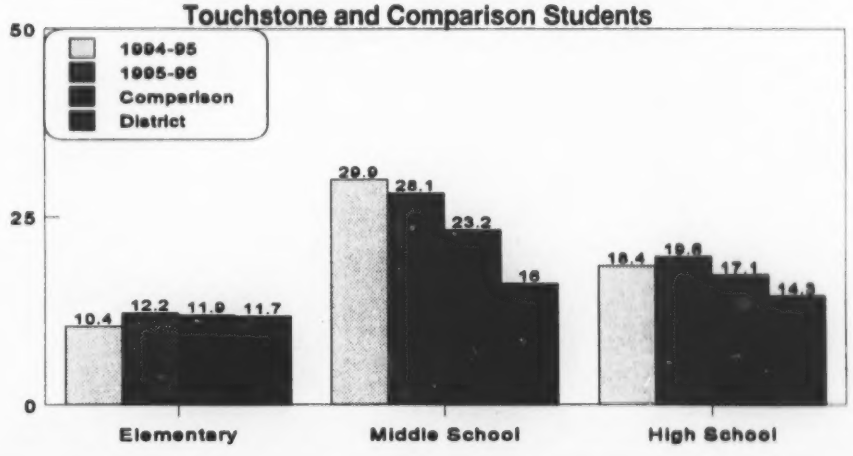
Figure 8. Grade 5, PALT Mathematics, 1994-1996



Overall, the analysis of student achievement scores indicates that participation in the Touchstone program positively affects student learning in the basic skills. In fact, the significant differences in reading and mathematics achievement in grades three and four and mathematics achievement in grade 5 suggest that student achievement is improved by a healthier family system and participation in the Portland Touchstone program.

Figure 9 displays information on school attendance by Touchstone students over the two years of the project as compared to the matched comparison group and the district population. The mean number of days absent for Touchstone elementary students (n=98) was 10.4 in year one and 12.2 in year two. The matched comparison students averaged 11.9 days absent which approximates the district average for elementary students of 11.7 days absent per year. Among the Portland Touchstone Project schools, middle school Touchstone students (n=24) missed the most school days, almost 30 days absent in each year. The middle school comparison group averaged 23.2 days absent and the district mean for middle school students is 16.0 days absent. Several of the Touchstone middle school students had alcohol and drug disciplinary violations which resulted in mandatory enrollment at the district's Counteract alternative program for a 45 day period. While at Counteract, student absences are tracked and then reported back to the students' regular school weekly. The higher absence rates at middle school may be indicative of these youth. Touchstone high school students (n=25) were absent an average of 19 days per year, while the comparison group averaged 17.1 days missed per year. Both of these groups are absent more frequently than the district mean for secondary students of 14.9 days per year. Overall, Touchstone elementary students were absent slightly less than the district average, but middle and high school Touchstone participants were absent more often than their district populations.

Figure 9. Number of Days Absent, 1994-1996
Touchstone and Comparison Students



Finding: Families report positive changes in family bonding and commitment to school.

Extensive follow-up interviews were conducted with a sample of 52 families who had participated in Touchstone activities for at least four months. The interview (see appendix) asked parents about their views on Touchstone's assistance with family goals, changes in their children's school behavior, impact on family life, use of community resources, substance abuse issues, and their satisfaction with the Touchstone program. It is important to note that Touchstone is a voluntary program for all of the families who participate in its services. People are recruited for the program based on the referral of a high-risk student to the project. Thus, the results of the follow-up interviews with families are a self-selected sample and may reflect those biases. The following tables summarize a sample of the items from the follow-up interviews with 52 adult Touchstone participants.

Families involved with the program reported the following initial goals for improving family relations: 1) better communication among family members, 2) reducing childrens' problem behaviors at school (grades, attendance, tardiness, completing assignments), 3) decreasing stresses at home (fighting, alcohol/drug use, domestic violence, homelessness), 4) improving anger management, 5) supporting children through emotional trauma, and 6) developing more positive attitudes in their children. All of the interviewed parents reported they had made significant progress in meeting their family goals.

As seen in Table 6, 88 percent of the families (n=46) reported that they had developed new family strengths during their participation with the project. Touchstone linked families with community resources to support the family and 80 percent of those interviewed stated that they made use of these community resources. Alcohol and other drug use was identified as a problem in fifty percent of the households. These families were referred to outside resources for assistance with the ATOD issues and 53 percent of the families followed-up on the referral to outside resources.

Table 6. Summary of Family Follow-Up Interviews (n=52)

Item	Cases	YES		NO	
		N	%	N	%
Have you developed *new* family strengths?	52	46	88.4	6	11.6
Did you use community resources that Touchstone referred you to?	52	41	78.8	11	21.2
Was a substance abuse problem identified in any members of your household?	52	26	50.0	26	50.0

Table 7 presents information on the parents' perception of impact of Touchstone on their family and their overall satisfaction with the program. Ninety-six percent of the parents reported they were very satisfied with the Touchstone program (n=50); the family's mean response was a high 4.8 level of satisfaction on a 5-point scale of 1 is not satisfied and 5 is very satisfied. The same response was seen for the item "What impact has Touchstone had on your family," 100 percent of the parents reported their family was *much better* since participating in Touchstone.

Another set of items asked parent/guardians about changes in their family life, specifically changes in communication among family members, changes in coping skills, improvements in family closeness and attachment. Over 91 percent of the parents (n=33) reported family communication was much better. Approximately 83 percent of the respondents felt their families (n=30) had much better ability to cope with problems, discipline issues, and life stresses. Eighty-six percent of the parents (n=31) said that their family bonding was much closer and they were able to do more things together since being involved with Touchstone. When asked to what extent parents were more involved in school and school-related activities (homework, attending school events, volunteering at school), 80.6 percent of the respondents reported they were much more involved in school.

Table 7.

Parents' Satisfaction with Touchstone Project (n=52)

Item	Very Satisfied		Fairly Satisfied		Not Satisfied		MEAN
	N		N		N		
Are you satisfied with Touchstone?	50	96.2	2	3.8	0	0.0	4.8
Item	**Much Better**		**No Impact**		**Much Worse**		**MEAN**
What impact has Touchstone had on your family?	52	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4.7
What changes do you see in your family's ability to communicate?	48	92.3	4	7.7	0	0.0	4.4
What changes do you see in your family's ability to cope with problems/stresses?	45	86.5	7	13.5	0	0.0	4.3
What changes do you see in your family's ability to operate as a family (closeness, doing things together)?	44	84.6	8	15.4	0	0.0	4.2
To what extent are you more involved in school and school-related activities?	43	82.7	9	17.3	0	0.0	4.2

The following statements are excerpts from one-to-one follow-up interviews conducted in summer 1996 with program participants describing what Touchstone meant to them.

- *I needed help and Touchstone was there for me. I didn't know where to turn. I called all over and did not get any help. Finally, I turned to the school for help and found Touchstone. The Touchstone staff was there for me. She helped me regain control and get back on track for the sake of my children.*

- *We are really glad we had the opportunity to be a Touchstone family. It's a great program. I feel this has been a real blessing. It has brought us closer as a family. Thanks again.*

- *From the first time you knocked on our door, you brought help. I had asked the Lord to help me and then you called to tell me about the Touchstone family program. I was able to change my housing mess and now my kids can say "Yes, my mama's home." I appreciate all your support and attention to our family. We have learned that we can trust each other and others again!*

- *Touchstone should be expanded to all schools so more parents can receive this support. I deeply appreciate the referral for helping the husband and wife relationship. This has helped clarify our parenting roles and improved communication. At home, our boy is still rebelling, but he has a better attitude about school. He especially enjoys the time you spend with him in the classroom.*

- *This is the first time someone from school has come to our home and helped me get in touch with the school. The resources you offered gave me strength and helped me let go of an abusive boyfriend. I don't know where we might be now without your support.*

- *Touchstone provided a tutor for my son. It improved his outlook on life. He is doing much better in school and the program helped me very much. It is important to support my child's education and behaviors. Touchstone should be continued. It has been very helpful to us.*

Chapter V. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Touchstone Project enjoyed much success in Portland Public Schools during the past two years of operation. School-based administrators and staff are highly supportive of the program and consider the Touchstone Specialists critical members of the school. The program benefited from an earlier pilot implementation of the model at two schools as indicated by a smooth expansion and efficient implementation at the new sites. Touchstone has developed into an comprehensive parent-school partnership to build family strengths and resolve issues of common concern to students, parents, and schools.

The evaluation of the Portland Touchstone Project resulted in three major findings. First, the Touchstone case families showed significant improvement in family cohesion and family adaptabilty as measured by the Family Circumplex Model. Second, Touchstone students in grades three and four showed more growth in basic skills achievement than a matched comparison group of students. Among fifth graders, results were mixed. In year one, Touchstone fifth grade students showed significant gains in math as compared to a matched comparison group, but the trend did not hold as strongly in year two. In reading, there was no statistical difference between the Touchstone fifth graders and comparison groups. Third, in follow-up interviews, over 90% of the parents reported their family had *much better* family communication, commitment to school, coping skills, and overall satisfaction since participating in the Touchstone Project.

Over the two year implementation of the Portland Touchstone Project, these findings show that the program is an effective intervention strategy for high-risk youth and their families. The intensity of services, personal involvement, and integration of support across multiple agencies proved especially beneficial to families without links to other community resources. For two years, the program has improved student learning and family functioning. This demonstrates that participation in Touchstone may contribute to the development of stronger, more empowered families and youth.

The successes of Touchstone are noteworthy. Yet, unstable funding and the extent of the need for services continues to cause concern for the project. There are more students and families in need of services than time and staff to serve them. There is also a need to for more publicity about the project in the schools and the community. In summary, the Portland Touchstone Project is a promising prevention model that should be continued and expanded for its benefit to families, youth, and its potential benefit to the community.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered for improving the Portland Touchstone Project:

- The project may wish to investigate what types of families benefit most from participation in Touchstone. In determining who are the "right" families, the staff might establish clear criteria for entrance to and exit from the program, set realistic expectations for outcomes, and develop a profile of families who prosper the most from Touchstone. This profile could include an assessment of risk factors at time of referral, family functioning, demographics and size of the family, availability of support systems, and follow-up on referral resources used by the family.

- The project director might consider developing a single-site monitoring plan to improve the level of Touchstone implementation at the one school with less than adequate performance by the Family Unity Specialist.

- The Portland Public Schools Prevention Office has provided strong leadership and coordination across several local, county, and state agencies to promote the continuation of the Touchstone Project. At the same time, there still remains a need to communicate the successes of the project more broadly. We recommend that information about Touchstone continue to be disseminated widely, so there is a better understanding of the program and its impact in the schools and the community.

- Stakeholders in the Touchstone Project seem to agree that the link between Touchstone services and reduced alcohol and other drug use is speculative. In future research, the project may wish to explore a plan for assessing changes in alcohol and other drug use among Touchstone participants.

- Future research might investigate the longitudinal outcomes of the Touchstone Project on the current youth participants, specifically in terms of any impact on their future alcohol and other drug use. In the future, the project might revisit this study's third grade Touchstone sample and examine their attitudes and behaviors towards drug use as compared to their peers as they enter the early teen years.

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APPENDIX A

AGENDA, FAMILY UNITY MODEL TRAINING
PORTLAND TOUCHSTONE PROJECT

TOUCHSTONE

Touchstone Training
November 16, 1994
8:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.
Blanchard Education Service Center
501 N. Dixon (north of Coliseum)
L-2 Conference Room
(elevator to L-2, straight down hall, on left)

1. Introductions
2. Referral and Recruitment of Families
3. Family Consent, Contact Information, Intake and "Pre" Assessment Activities
4. Family Unity Meetings, Family Get Togethers, and Other Touchstone Activities
5. Budget
6. Community Resources
7. Ongoing and "Post" Evaluation Activities
8. When and How to Exit Families
9. Ongoing Meeting Schedule/Other Training Needs
10. PPS Resources
    - Student Services
    - Drug Prevention Programs
    - Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

APPENDIX B

TOUCHSTONE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Touchstone Program

Touchstone is a school-based program which builds upon family strengths. The key assumption underlying the Touchstone model is that families want the best for their children, and that even high risk or alcohol/drug involved families can show considerable resolve, ingenuity, and adaptability in dealing with the stresses in their lives. Touchstone addresses students and families as a unit, and regards the family as the central authority on its particular needs and issues of concern.

An intervention strategy called the Family Unity Meeting is used to identify the family's strengths, resources and issues of concern. Family Unity Meetings involve convening the family and other persons invited by the family in order to identify issues of concern, family strengths and resources, and to develop a plan for working toward resolution of identified concerns. Developed by Larry Graber at the Oregon Children's Services Division, the Family Unity Model has been adopted as worthy of national replication by the Child Welfare League of America. As a growth rather than a deficit model, it is designed to help families help themselves. Touchstone is the use of the Family Unity Model within the school setting.

Touchstone is implemented by Family Unity Specialists/Family Intervention Specialists who work on-site at a specific school. They receive referrals from designated school staff regarding student risks and concerns. The Specialists contact the family, and using methods based on the Family Unity Model, will seek to engage the family in plans and services to improve family and student functioning. The Family Unity Model is based on the belief that families have the best information about their circumstances and needs and are able to identify what will best assist them to improve their situations.

There will be Touchstone programs at fifteen Portland School District schools during the 1995-96 school year. The program is supported with federal funds to state of Oregon and Portland Public Schools and by Multnomah County general fund.

APPENDIX C

FACES II - FAMILY CIRCUMPLEX MODEL
SAMPLE PRE - POST SCORING

THREE-DIMENSIONAL FAMILY CIRCUMPLEX MODEL
FACES II: Linear Scoring and Interpretation

School: Boise/Eliot
Case: Sample Pre-Post
Profile for: Mother & Father
Date: 2/7/95 & 4/31/95

* *Sample* *

COHESION		
8	80 74	Very Connected
7	73 71	
6	70 (65)	Connected POST
5	64 (60)	PRE
4	59 55	Separated
3	54 51	
2	50 35	Disengaged
1	34 15	

ADAPTABILITY		
8	70 65	Very Flexible
7	64 55	
6	54 (52) 50	Flexible POST
5	49 46	
4	(45) 43	Structured PRE
3	42 40	
2	39 30	Rigid
1	29 15	

FAMILY TYPE	
8	Balanced
7	
(6)	Moderately Balanced POST
5	
(4)	Mid-Range PRE
3	
2	Extreme
1	

Interpretation:

FAMILY COHESION assesses the degree to which family members are separated from or connected to their family. Cohesion is defined as *the emotional bonding that family members have toward one another*. There are four levels of family cohesion: disengaged, separated, connected, and very connected (or enmeshed).

FAMILY ADAPTABILITY has to do with the extent to which the family system is flexible and able to change. Adaptability is defined as *the ability of a family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress.* There are four levels of family adaptability: rigid, structured, flexible, and very flexible (or chaotic).

Together these two perspectives yield a ***FAMILY TYPE*** which helps to tap the complexity and richness of the family system. The two balanced levels are hypothesized to be most viable for healthy family functioning, while the mid-range and extreme areas are seen as more problematic for families overtime.

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APPENDIX D

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

TOUCHSTONE STUDENT INTAKE/UPDATE

Family Unity Specialist: Please complete this form at the time of referral in an interview with the person referring the youth. This form is also completed at the time of exit from the Touchstone program and at the end of school year in June.

Student _____ Date _____

Student I.D. #_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ School _____ Grade _____

Parent Name _____ Parent Phone _____

Primary Referral Contact _____ Referral Phone _____

STUDENT/FAMILY STRENGTHS: (must be completed for Touchstone intake)
Touchstone builds on the strengths of students and their families. List 3 positive factors related to the student and family.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Risk Factor Indicators: (check as many as apply)

☐ **SCHOOL:**
- ☐ *ACADEMIC*
  - ____ Poor academic achievement
  - ____ Low commitment to school/lack of interest
  - ____ Falling behind in classwork
  - ____ Ability/achievement disparity
  - ____ Additional services (Chapter I, ESL, SpEd)
- ☐ *ATTENDANCE*
  - ____ Absenteeism
  - ____ Tardies
  - ____ Suspension
  - ____ Frequent nurse/counselor visits

☐ **INDIVIDUAL:**
- ☐ *BEHAVIOR*
  - ____ Alienation and rebelliousness
  - ____ Seeks unsafe/dangerous sensations
  - ____ Lacks ethics/belief in a moral order
  - ____ Early initiation of antisocial behavior
  - ____ Current antisocial behavior
  - ____ Attitudes favorable to antisocial behavior
  - ____ Attitudes favorable to alcohol/drug use
  - ____ Gang exposure/involvement
- ☐ *PHYSICAL*
  - ____ Physical limitations: state _____
  - ____ Poor nutrition/hygiene
  - ____ Sleeping in class
  - ____ Physical complaints
  - ____ Physical injuries explained or suspected
  - ____ Suspected alcohol/drug use
  - ____ Reported alcohol/drug use

☐ **PEER GROUP:**
- ____ Interaction with antisocial peers
- ____ Peer attitudes favorable to antisocial behavior
- ____ Peer alcohol/drug use
- ____ Change in peer group
- ____ Interaction with older social group

☐ **FAMILY:**
- ____ Poor family management
- ____ Poor family discipline practices
- ____ High family conflict
- ____ Low family attachment/alienation from family
- ____ Family history of antisocial behavior
- ____ Family attitudes favorable to antisocial behavior
- ____ Suspected alcohol/drug use in the home
- ____ Reported child abuse
- ____ Family difficulties (death, divorce, etc.)
- ____ Custody concerns

☐ **COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD:**
- ____ Low neighborhood attachment
- ____ Community disorganization
- ____ Transitions and mobility are high
- ____ Laws and norms favorable to drug use
- ____ Perceived availability of drugs, gangs, & guns
- ____ Inappropriate housing conditions

☐ **OTHER AGENCIES INVOLVED:**
- ____ Adult and Family Services
- ____ Children's Services Division
- ____ Court
- ____ Caseworker(s) ___ Other_____
  - Name:_____
  - Phone:_____

☐ **ATTITUDE/BEHAVIOR CHANGE:**
Do these indicators reflect a change from the student's past behavior?
_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

Portland Public Schools
Portland Touchstone Project

FAMILY CONSENT FORM

This letter indicates that I have accepted the invitation for myself and my child(ren),

_____
(child's name)

to participate in the Portland Public Schools Touchstone Project. The aim of the Project is to study services to children and their families over time to determine how the joint efforts of families, schools, and communities can help students perform well and stay in school.

I give permission to the schools my child attends to release and exchange information with this Project. I understand this may include all personal family information including information from teachers, school records, assessments, and family contact information including present address and telephone number.

I understand that at any time I may choose to withdraw myself and my child from the Project or any part of the Project, and that I may choose to not answer particular questions.

_____ _____
Parent/Guardian's Name Date

TOUCHSTONE FAMILY CONTACT INFORMATION

FAMILY UNITY SPECIALIST: Please complete the following information during your initial interview with the family. Please tell the family this information will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be used to help the FUS contact the family, learn more about them, and work more effectively with the family and child.

DATE OPENED: _____ DATE CLOSED: _____

(1) Household Head: (a) _____

Other Adults: (b) _____

(c) _____

(2) Address: _____

(3) City: _____ Zipcode: _____

(4) Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

(5) Children:	Name	Sex (6)	DOB (7)	Race (8)	Grade (9)	School (10)
Primary:	(a) _____	___	___	___	___	_____
Other:	(b) _____	___	___	___	___	_____
	(c) _____	___	___	___	___	_____
	(d) _____	___	___	___	___	_____
	(e) _____	___	___	___	___	_____

(11) Student's Living Situation:
Both parents___ Parent & Step-parent___ One parent___ Parent & Sig.Other___ Relatives/friends___ Other___

(12) Total Number Living in Home: _____ (13) Number of Children: _____ (14) Number of Adults: ____

(15) Length of time living at present address? _____ (16) Language spoken at home? _____

(17) Best times to reach you at home? _____

(18) Best times to reach you at work? _____

(19) Name of a friend or relative who can help us reach you? _____

(20) Phone number? _____

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TOUCHSTONE INTERVENTION PROJECT

TOUCHSTONE FAMILY UNITY AGREEMENT

DATE OF MEETING: _____ FAMILY NAME: _____ SCHOOL: _____

GOAL: _____

_____

NAME	AGREES TO:	BY THIS DATE	INITIAL	
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No
				Yes In Process No

ADULT PARTICIPANTS: (check all and total at right)

- ☐ Mother/Stepmother
- ☐ Father/Stepfather
- ☐ Significant Other
- ☐ Grandparent(s)
- ☐ Foster Parent
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Relative
- ☐ Counselor
- ☐ Therapist
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Family Unity Specialist
- ☐ State Services to Child.& Families
- ☐ Probation Officer
- ☐ Clergy/Minister
- ☐ Other Adults

YOUTH PARTICIPANTS (check all)

- ☐ Primary Son
- ☐ Primary Daughter
- ☐ Older Brother(s)
- ☐ Older Sister(s)
- ☐ Younger Brother(s)
- ☐ Younger Sister(s)
- ☐ Other Children

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS:
No. of Adults: _____
No. of Youth: _____
Total Number of Participants: _____

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Distribution: White—Evaluation Yellow—Touchstone Specialist Pink—Family

FACES II: Family Version

Name: _____ Role: _____ Date: _____

1 Almost Never	2 Once in Awhile	3 Sometimes	4 Frequently	5 Almost Always

Describe your family:

___	1.	Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times.
___	2.	In our family, it is easy for everyone to express his/her opinion.
___	3.	It is easier to discuss problems with people outside the family than with family members.
___	4.	Each family member has input in major family decisions.
___	5.	Our family gathers together in the same room.
___	6.	Children have a say in their discipline.
___	7.	Our family does things together.
___	8.	Family members discuss problems and feel good about the solutions.
___	9.	In our family, everyone goes his/her own way.
___	10.	We shift household responsibilities from person to person.
___	11.	Family members know each other's close friends.
___	12.	It is hard to know what the rules are in our family.
___	13.	Family members consult other family members on their decisions.
___	14.	Family members say what they want.
___	15.	We have difficulty thinking of things to do as a family.
___	16.	In solving problems, the children's suggestions are followed.
___	17.	Family members feel very close to each other.
___	18.	Discipline is fair in our family.
___	19.	Family members feel closer to people outside the family than to other family members.
___	20.	Our family tries new ways of dealing with problems.
___	21.	Family members go along with what the family decides to do.
___	22.	In our family, everyone shares responsibilities.
___	23.	Family members like to spend their free time with each other.
___	24.	It is difficult to get a rule changed in our family.
___	25.	Family members avoid each other at home.
___	26.	When problems arise, we compromise.
___	27.	We approve of each other's friends.
___	28.	Family members are afraid to say what is on their minds.
___	29.	Family members pair up rather than do things as a total family.
___	30.	Family members share interests and hobbies with each other.

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PORTLAND TOUCHSTONE PROJECT
CONTACT LOG

Student _____ School:(circle one) B/E HU KE KI VE WO TU JE

Complete a log note for every contact made relevant to the above named student or her/his family. Be concise, but include information key to understanding the progress made by the individual/family.

Date of contact: _____ Person contacted: _____

NOTES ON CONTACT:

FUS Initials _____

TOUCHSTONE EXIT FORM

Family Unity Specialist: Please complete this form to identify the reason(s) that the student and family left the Touchstone program.

DATE OPENED: _____ DATE CLOSED: _____

Family: _____

Child's Name: _____

School: _____

FUS: _____

1. Number of Family Unity Meetings held with this family? _____
2. Reason for Exit: (check any that apply)

- ☐ Family accomplished their goal(s).
- ☐ Family moved out of district.
- ☐ Student transferred to another PPS School, in Jefferson Region.
- ☐ Student transferred to another PPS School, not in Jefferson Region.
- ☐ Student now lives with another family member, guardian, or foster family.
- ☐ FUS not able to contact family; location unknown.
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

3. Briefly describe the reason for closure with the student and family. Summarize your interactions, observations, impressions, and the impact of Touchstone services.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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